

Maryland State Board of Law Examiners
GUIDANCE FOR CERTIFICATION OF PRE-LEGAL EDUCATION

Background: Maryland's Bar Admission Rule 2 requires each Maryland Bar Applicant to submit official documentation certifying satisfaction of the pre-legal education requirements contained in Bar Admission Rule 3. Recently, SBLE has learned that many law schools and undergraduate institutions refuse to complete and sign the Certification of College Education (Pre-legal) that is printed on the 2nd page of Part I of the Maryland Bar Application, preferring instead to issue the institution's own certification form. In order to ensure the uniformity and authenticity of the information collected, SBLE may not be able to accept your undergraduate institution's in-house certification form, often delaying the application process. SBLE rejects more application filings due to incomplete or untimely college/pre-legal certification than any other single reason.

Purpose: The purpose of this document is to advise prospective applicants to the Maryland Bar of the manner in which they may certify their college/pre-legal education to the State Board of Law Examiners (SBLE) pursuant to Bar Admission Rules 2 and 3, thereby establishing preliminary eligibility to sit for the Maryland Bar Examination.

Policy Guidance: Effective immediately, there are two (2) methods to certify the college/pre-legal education. (*Applicants may choose either method. It is NOT necessary to do both:*)

VIA OFFICIAL UNDERGRADUATE TRANSCRIPT (preferred method):

- The Applicant should cause their undergraduate institution to issue an official transcript showing conferral of the Bachelor's degree or equivalent. (*The transcript must be issued by the institution awarding the degree.*) (*Applicants admitted to law school without a Bachelor's degree must contact SBLE's administrative office to receive instructions on the required certification documents.*) (*Transcripts from non-degree undergraduate schools are not required.*) (*Partial/non-degree law school transcripts are not required.*)
- The transcript must be issued to: State Board of Law Examiners, 2011-F Commerce Park Drive, Annapolis, Maryland 21401. (*The transcript should not be "issued to student," even if "official."*)
- The undergraduate institution should mail the transcript directly to SBLE, and it must arrive in SBLE's office BEFORE the Applicant files the required hard-copy Application (Part I and Part II). (*SBLE will notify the Applicant of receipt of the undergraduate transcript via email and receipt of the transcript will be reflected on the Applicant's "My Status" page in eBar. The required hard copy Application (Part I and Part II) may be filed immediately upon receipt of notification that the transcript was received by SBLE. Applicants should include a copy of the notification email in their filing.*)
- If the Applicant believes that there may be insufficient time before an applicable filing deadline for the undergraduate institution to submit the transcript directly to SBLE, the Applicant may obtain the sealed official transcript from the undergraduate institution and submit it to SBLE in person or by commercial delivery service along with the Application (Part I and Part II). (*Transcripts delivered by the Applicant must meet the "Issued to SBLE" requirement and must remain in the original sealed enveloped as issued by the school.*)
- SBLE will accept electronic transcripts so long as the email delivering the transcript derives directly from the undergraduate institution or a transcript service such as SCRIP-SAFE International (eSCRIP-SAFE.com) or the National Student Clearinghouse (studentclearinghouse.org), and the transcript is an "official electronic transcript." (*Scanned PDFs of hard copy official transcripts are not acceptable.*)

This document supersedes the bold-faced, CAPITALIZED instructions contained in paragraph 3 of the first page of the printed application, related to the Pre-legal Certification form, only. The first page of Application Part I still must be printed, signed by the Applicant, and submitted to SBLE. Only the second page of Part I may be omitted/left blank in favor of a transcript.

VIA SUBMISSION OF THE CERTIFICATION OF COLLEGE EDUCATION (PRE-LEGAL) FORM:

SBLE will continue to accept the certification form printed as part of Application Part I. In order to be accepted, as in the past, the Part I Certification must be completed in full and must bear the original signature of an authorized school official and the original seal or stamp of the college or university.